

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SHB 2777

As Passed House:
February 17, 2004

Title: An act relating to after-school programs.

Brief Description: Providing for a study of after-school programs.

Sponsors: By House Committee on Education (originally sponsored by Representatives McDermott, Haigh and Schual-Berke).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Education: 1/26/04, 2/5/04 [DPS].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 2/17/04, 96-0.

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Directing the Superintendent of Public Instruction and the Department of Social and Health Services to work with the Washington After-School Network in the acquisition of information and the creation of a statewide vision and strategic plan for after-school programs.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 11 members: Representatives Quall, Chair; McDermott, Vice Chair; Talcott, Ranking Minority Member; Tom, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Anderson, Cox, Haigh, Hunter, McMahan, Rockefeller and Santos.

Staff: Susan Morrissey (786-7111).

Background:

According to reports jointly produced by the United States Departments of Justice and Education, high-quality after-school programs can help students stay in school, achieve academically, and obey the laws. The agencies found that these after-school programs:

- Decrease juvenile crime, vandalism in schools, and negative influences that lead to drug, alcohol and tobacco use;
- Strengthen student achievement;
- Improve school attendance and graduation rates;

- Improve homework completion rates;
- Reduce the percentage of students held back a grade or placed in special education programs;
- Increase student aspirations, including high school graduation and college attendance goals; and
- Improve school behavior.

The reports also identified some of the common characteristics of high-quality after-school programs designed to meet the needs of a diverse population of school-age children and suggested some of the types of community partnerships that have led to program success.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

The Legislature finds that leaving children unsupervised after school can lead to a number of undesirable outcomes. The Legislature also finds that good after-school programs can provide safe and effective learning environments for school-age children who would otherwise be left alone after school. The programs can also improve student behavior and achievement and can help children develop effective relationships and conflict resolution skills. The Legislature intends to direct two state agencies to work with the Washington After-School Network to develop a statewide vision and strategic plan designed to ensure that the state has a roadmap for after-school programs.

The Superintendent of Public Instruction and the Department of Social and Health Services will work with the Washington After-School Network to gather information and complete the following responsibilities by October 31, 2004:

- Assess the state of after-school programs available in the state;
- Identify the funding sources available for program support;
- Study model after-school programs operating in the state and identify the components that lead to the success of those programs;
- Develop a statewide vision and strategic plan to provide a roadmap for after-school programs; and
- Report to the Governor and various legislative committees with any findings and recommendations.

The two agencies may provide funding to the Washington After-School Network to gather the information and accomplish the responsibilities required by October 31, 2004.

An emergency clause is attached.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.

Testimony For: The peak hours for juvenile crime occur immediately after the school day ends. After-school programs provide children and youth with safe, supervised environments. Many after-school programs offer children the opportunity to complete their homework with help from a caring adult. Others give children an opportunity to learn athletic or artistic skills that schools may not have time to teach. It gives schools an opportunity to partner with local agencies and foundations in providing the programs. Some communities have experienced a noticeable improvement in student achievement as a result of their after-school programs. Although there is a need for these programs, many students do not have access to them. There is a great need for sustainable funding for the programs.

Testimony Against: None.

Persons Testifying: (In support) Janet Frieling, School's Out Washington; Arnel Blancas, Harbor After School; Ben Talbert, Miller Junior High, Aberdeen; and Norman Luther, volunteer.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: (In support) Mary Kenfield, Parent Teacher Association, Greg Williamson, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction; and Rainer Houser, Association of Washington School Principals.